

City of Asheville
Planning and Economic Development Committee
DRAFT
Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2006 – 2:00 p.m.
City Hall – Room 209

Meeting Began: 2:10 p.m.

Present: Councilman Jan B. Davis, Chairman; Vice-Mayor Diana Hollis Jones; Councilwoman Robin L. Cape; City Manager Gary W. Jackson; Planning and Development Director Scott Shuford; Economic Development Director Samuel Powers; City Engineer Cathy Ball; Building Safety Director Robert Griffin; Civic Center Director David Pisha; Real Estate Manager Ed Vess; Deputy City Clerk Phyllis Corns; and numerous citizens and visitors.

1. Organizational Issues

The Chairman gave an overview of Committee's role. In the near future the Chairs of all four Committees will meet with Mayor Bellamy and present their top priorities, which will be used to set Council's priorities for the next twelve months.

The Committee agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of each month, beginning at 2:00 p.m. The location of future meetings will be determined. Therefore, the next meeting of the Committee will be on Wednesday, April 12, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. Public comment will be taken at the end of each meeting, limited to three minutes per speaker, with a maximum of five speakers. Committee members welcome information and comment by mail, e-mail, fax or phone. The Committee reserves the right to hold executive sessions when needed due to the nature of development/real estate issues.

2. Pending Issues and Strategic Initiatives for Consideration

Planning Policy Direction

Scott Shuford reviewed a list of areas for possible continued consideration by the Committee. The Committee directed staff to cease discussions with Buncombe County concerning the JPA (Joint Planning Area), and to move forward rapidly with the ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction). The Committee directed that the Map of Consideration for Future Annexations be revisited this year. Councilwoman Cape will bring information to the Committee in April concerning the restructuring and use of language in the UDO.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to address form-based codes, the UDO, the 2025 Plan, hillside/hilltop ordinances, the West End/Clingman Avenue Corridor; the Merrimon Avenue Corridor, and river development. The Committee directed staff to be prepared to discuss the JPA and regional planning issues at their April meeting. Chairman Davis spoke in support of making voluntary annexations a high priority, while making certain the City can provide the necessary services to the annexed areas. Councilwoman Cape voiced the need to work with area municipalities in providing services for annexed areas and the need for linkage.

City-Owned Property

Scott Shuford reviewed City-owned properties available for development. The Committee asked staff to work further on the Britt Drive land swap and to provide information at a future Committee meeting. Regarding the Old Asheland Avenue property and the two parcels in the East Riverside area, staff was directed to proceed with RFQs (Request for Qualifications) for each of these properties.

The Block

Gary Jackson spoke concerning the need for the Committee to affirm the plan for The Block, and set policy for the City's role in development of The Block. It is staff's desire to see the project move forward. The Committee and Council need to set parameters. Scott Shuford briefly reviewed the plan. The goal is to respect the history of area, explore rehabilitation opportunities, and seek proper infill development.

Upon further discussion the Committee agreed that the plan for The Block needs to be reviewed and either reaffirmed or revised; at which time goals can be identified and carried out by the best agency equipped to do so. With the Chairman's agreement, Eugene Ellison addressed the Committee. Chairman Davis said the City needs to move forward with development of The Block.

The Committee directed Gary Jackson to arrange a meeting to include Eugene Ellison, Chairman Davis and stakeholders to discuss The Block's development.

Civic Center Update

This item is to be discussed at a future Committee meeting.

3. Establish a 2006 Action Plan

This item is to be discussed at a future Committee meeting.

4. Public Comment

Aaron Voigt, owner of the above referenced property on Britt Drive, spoke before the Committee concerning the current and future status of his property and the City's intentions concerning his property. It was recommended by the Chair that the speaker continue to work with City staff.

5. Executive Session

The Committee went into Executive Session at 3:58 p.m. The Committee concluded the Executive Session and adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

The next meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee will be on Wednesday, April 12, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Economic Development Office, located at 29 Haywood Street.